

A

# REVIEW

## OF THE

# STATE

## OF THE

# BRITISH NATION.

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Saturday, March 17. 1711.

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**T**HE Author of a Paper call'd the *Examiner*, whatever he may have done in other Things, I acknowledge he has Treated *Scotland* with something more Candor and Justice, than any of our Modern Writers on that Side, in the Case of Mr. *Greenfields*; and that I may do Justice to him, and yet at the same Time do Justice to the Case in Hand, I shall give a brief State of the Thing, such as may consist with Decency and Respect to all Parties, and yet clear up that Side which I conceive Injur'd is the Dispute.

First, I say, to do Justice to the *Examiner*, I shall, with his Pardon, Reprint as

much of the Paragraph in his Paper, as is to the present purpose, that the Case may come fixt to the World in his own Words.

*Examiner*, N<sup>o</sup> 31. March 1. 1710.

**I** Had a Letter last Week relating to Mr. *Greenfields* an Episcopal Clergyman of *Scotland*, and the Writer seems to be a Gentleman of that part of *Britain*. I remember formerly to have read a Printed Account of Mr. *Greenfield's* Case, who has been Prosecuted and Silenc'd for no other reason beside Reading Divine Service, after the manner of the Church of *England*,

England, to his own Congregation, who desire it: Though, as the Gentleman who writes to me says, there is no Law in Scotland against those Meetings; and he adds, that the Sentence pronounc'd against Mr. Greenfields, will soon be confirm'd, if some care be not taken to prevent it. I am altogether uninform'd in the Particulars of this Case, and besides, to treat it justly, would not come within the Compass of my Paper; Therefore I could wish the Gentleman would undertake it in a Discourse by itself; and I should be glad he would inform the Publick in one Fact, whether *Episcopal Assemblies* are freely allow'd in Scotland? 'Tis notorious that abundance of their Clergy fled from thence some Years ago into England and Ireland, as from a Persecution; but it was alledg'd by their Enemies, that they refus'd to take the Oaths to the Government, which however none of them scrupl'd when they came among us. It is somewhat extraordinary to see our *Whigs* and *Fanatics* keep such a stir about the *sacred Alt of Toleration*, while their Brethren will not allow a *Connivance* in so near a Neighbourhood; especially if what the Gentleman insists on in his Letter be true, that nine Parts in ten of the Nobility and Gentry, and two in three of the Commons, be *Episcopal*; of which one Argument he offers, is the present Choice of their Representatives in both Houses, tho' oppos'd to the utmost by the Preachings, Threatnings, and Anathemas of the *Kirk*. Such Usage to a Majority, may, as he thinks, be of dangerous Consequence; and I entirely agree with him. If these be the Principles of *Hugh Kirk*, God preserve at least the *Southern Parts* from their Tyranny.

The Modesty and Justice which I own to the Author of the *Examiner* in this Paper, is, that being uninform'd in the Matter, he first owns it, and next, that he takes want of Information in a Matter, to be a sufficient Reason for him to decline speaking of

it.—— And lastly, that he Publishes what he has receiv'd, not only as receiv'd from a third Hand, but with this handsome Premonition, if it be true.

This I own is what I have not been us'd to meet with, from *Rebearsals*, *Moderators*, or any Author that I remember to have Written on that Side, but they would presently have asserted what on such a Letter they had got a Notion of, and often without any such Authority, as I have reason to believe.

Nor will I infer, that the Premonition, if it be true, which the *Examiner* has thus made use of, proceeds from his just Suspicion of the Truth of it; the great Improbability of the Thing, or the Multitude of Affirmations on every Side to the contrary.—— But that he may be Treated with Justice and Candor in return to it, I shall lay the Case before him for his better Information, for the allaying the Heats, and removing the Prejudices among us, against an Injur'd and Misrepresented People; and this I shall endeavour to do calmly, and with as much clearness as I can.—— And I'll answer at any Court of Justice for the Truth of what I shall assert.

First.—— It is said, Mr. Greenfields has been Prosecuted and Silenc'd for no other Reason, besides Reading Divine Service after the manner of the Church of England, to his own Congregation who desir'd it.—— This is the Author of the *Examiner*'s Words, not the Writer of the Letter to him.

This indeed, Sir, proves you are, as you say, altogether uninform'd in the Particulars in the Case, and this is the only venture you have made, to speak without Information; upon which I shall make no Remark, for Reflection is not my Design; but I shall, if you please to accept it, inform you in the Case, and if you will not accept it, 'twill serve to inform others, and prevent their falling into the same Error, of speaking when they are altogether uninform'd.—— The Fact is thus.

Mr.



Mr. *Greenshields* was not Prosecuted for Reading Divine Service after the manner of the Church of *England*; he was never ask'd one Question about what Worship he had set up, either by the *Presbytery* or the *Magistrates*, or any Body else — But he was Prosecuted for Exercising the Office of a Minister without being Authoriz'd to it, as the Law requir'd : I shall not trouble you with his Answers ; his declining the Legal Judicatories, Contempt, &c. that would be to write the History over again ; but this is plain, the whole Case turn'd upon nothing but this — He was Ordain'd by no Legal Authority, no, nor Episcopal, but by an Ex-auctorate Bishop, that is a Depos'd Non-Furor — This they adjug'd to be no Legal Ordination, and that he was therefore no Minister ; and upon this only, he was Sentenc'd not to Exercise the Office of a Minister within the Bounds of that *Presbytery* — This is the whole matter of Fact.

Next the Letter (not the *Examiner*) says, there is no Law against those Meetings — Tho' this is not Fact, yet this is not the Question ; but whether there is any Law against a Person being receiv'd as a Minister, upon an Ordination by a Depos'd Bishop ? And here tho' there were no Law, yet the Nature of the Thing, and the Practice in *England*, seems to me to make it most Rational, that whether a Man so Ordain'd be a Minister in general or no, he cannot be receiv'd as a Minister of that Church, which has depos'd and depriv'd, and taken all Power and Authority from that Bishop ; but this is not all, for by the Act ancient Intruders into Churches 1706, it is expressly said thus. —

• The Queen and the Lords of her Majesty's Counsel — (and this in those Times was Law) do hereby Prohibit and Discharge all Persons who have no Authority from within the Church

• of *Scotland*, but pretend to a War-rant or License from the late Ex-auctorate Bishops, since they were Ex-auctorate, to exercise any part of the Ministerial Function, within this Church, or in any Kirk. or in any Paroch thereof, upon pain of being seiz'd and secur'd by the Magistrates of the Bounds, pursuant to the Act of Parliament 1663, and the Magistrates are hereby requir'd to seize and secure such Persons accordingly, and Punish them according to Law.

Now I refer it to the Candor of Mr. *Examiner*, whether his Letter is not guilty of a gross Error ? And whether the Prosecution of Mr. *Greenshields* has been regular or no ?

The next mistake is not the Letter, but the *Examiner*, viz. To his own Congregation that desir'd it — Nothing is more evident, than that Mr. *Greenshields* had no such Thing as a Congregation, but was just come over from *Ireland*, and desir'd to go thither again (as he said ;) but falling in with some People who had for Ends of their own, this Project to try upon the People of *Scotland* — They drew him into it, and began a Subscription for it, among the *English* Officers of the Customs, Exchequer, and other Officers, tho' those Gentlemen when they saw the Design, quitted it again and cancell'd their Subscriptions.

Mr. *Examiner* may also observe, that had there not been more in this, than a bare reading the *English* Liturgy, he had receiv'd no Trouble at all, since the same Service is read in two or three other Meetings in the same City, and was then, and even by some that do neither take the Oaths or pray for the Queen ; and yet the *Presbytery* or the *Magistrates* offer them no disturbance — This makes it clear, that *Greenshields* was not Prosecuted *qua* Episcopal, or *qua* Reading Common Prayer, tho' had it been so, it might have been justify'd by the Law.

But the matter of Fact is plain, it was an Attempt upon the Constitution of *Scotland*

*law*, both in Church and State, to try, 1<sup>st</sup>. If they could introduce the Common Prayer there, in Defiance and Contempt both of Church Authority and Magistracy itself — And 2. If not, if they could provoke the People to Disorders and Violence, that so having Embroil'd them with the Government for the Breach of the Peace, they might Embark the Civil Authority against the Ecclesiastick, in defence of an Innovation.

Now Mr. *Examiner* knows there is a great difference between Connivence, which I affirm is more practis'd, and with more Patience in *Scotland*, than ever it was, or now in *England*; and being insulted and contemned, the Church of *Scotland* and the Government in *Scotland*, connives every where at the Meetings, not of the Episcopal People only, but the very *Jacobites*, to a degree never to be equalled; and when I come to it, I'll make even the *Examiner* judge of it: But if the Episcopal People come to claim it as a Right, and take it by Force, insult Government and Magistrates, and defie the Civil as well as Ecclesiastical

Power, the Case quite differs, Magistracy ceases, the Queen is no longer Queen, Establishments are of no Force, and the Church of *Scotland* has no longer a Settlement by Law; For what signifies Authority, when its Just Rights cannot be Supported? — The Church of *England* is too much a Friend to Law to justify this; and in the Prosecution of the Question I shall endeavour to prove,

1. That the Church of *Scotland*, or the Magistrates of *Edinburgh*, could do no less than they did.
2. That if they are not justified and Supported in it, the Laws of *Scotland* or the Government in *Scotland* can no longer exist.
3. That that Force was upon them, and they acted only in their own Defence.

I shall with the same calmness, and I hope in this I have not given him Offence, go on to inform him in the other Mistakes of his Friend's Letter.

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